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The Russian-Ukrainian war and its impact on the food security of Arab countries

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Abstract:

This study aimed to analyze the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, which is considered one of the most influential crises on the world at the present time because of its influential and major repercussions on the food security of the Arab countries. The study aims to clarify the causes of the Russian-Ukrainian war, and to clarify the extent to which the food security of the Arab countries is affected by the Russian-Ukrainian crisis. 2022-2024, and knowing the most important challenges facing the industrial and agricultural sectors around the world in general and the Arab countries in particular following the Russian-Ukrainian crisis.

The study concluded that the Russian-Ukrainian war, at a time when the world was on its way out of the Corona-COVID-19 pandemic, which had the most severe impact on developing countries, including Arab countries, caused disruption to global supply chains, and the most prominent repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war were the fluctuations in energy prices, especially Crude oil and natural gas. One of the most severe effects was the food price crisis, especially wheat, which increased the possibility of a global food crisis. The study concluded that the Russian-Ukrainian war threatened global and Arab food security.

Keywords: The Russian-Ukrainian; war Arab food security; Global food crisis; Corona pandemic; the economic dimension.

Introduction:

There is no doubt that food security is one of the pivotal issues that the world is concerned with in general. The problem of food is among the most complex challenges currently faced by the Arab society. This issue has technical, economic, political, and social causes. Recently, the world has witnessed a deterioration in food security, with more than 950 million people suffering from hunger worldwide. The situation has been further exacerbated by the inability to increase investment in

agricultural lands and the neglect of these lands, climate change, water scarcity, and significant population growth. Additional risks include the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war, as both Russia and Ukraine are among the world's largest exporters of a key food commodity-wheat.

Food security is a fundamental human need, a truth highlighted in the Quran: "So let them worship the Lord of this House, who has fed them, [saving them] from hunger and made them safe, [saving them] from fear" (Quraysh: 3-4). Throughout history, nations have strived to ensure the availability of food to safeguard the well-being and security of their populations, thus preserving human sustainability.

On the morning of February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine under the pretext of a "special operation," instilling fear worldwide. Global leaders condemned this invasion as illegal and unjustifiable. The war between Russia and Ukraine has led to a severe global food crisis due to complex supply chain disruptions and rising agricultural input prices. Arab countries have been directly affected due to their heavy reliance on food imports from Russia and Ukraine. Furthermore, this food crisis comes at a particularly challenging time, given the compounded effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, repeated food shocks, and the political and economic difficulties faced by some Arab nations.

Research Problem:

The issue of food insecurity in the Arab world has arisen from the decline in food imports following the Russian-Ukrainian war, compounded by the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis amidst unfavorable climatic conditions for agriculture in most Arab countries and complex political circumstances. The study's central problem is to understand the impact of the war between Russia and Ukraine on the trade of strategic food products and food supplies to the Arab world.

This study aims to answer the main question: What are the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on the food security of Arab countries? The following sub-questions are derived from this main question:

What caused the recent Russian-Ukrainian war in 2022?

What are the effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on Russia and Ukraine?

What are the implications of the Russian-Ukrainian war on global food security?

What restrictions did countries impose in response to the Russian-Ukrainian crisis that led to global food price increases?

What is the state of food security in Arab countries following the Russian-Ukrainian war crisis?

What are the effects of the Russian-Ukrainian war on oil and gas prices in Arab countries?

What are the implications of the Russian-Ukrainian war on wheat and food supplies in Arab countries?

Research Importance:

The significance of this research lies in the importance of global food security and the global food value chain by investigating Arab food security in the context of the war between Russia and Ukraine and the impact of this war on the flow of strategic food products to the Arab world.

Research Objectives:

The research aims to:

Clarify the causes of the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Identify the reasons behind the increase in food prices resulting from the Russian-Ukrainian war.

Explain the extent to which the food security of Arab countries has been affected, especially during the Russian-Ukrainian crisis from 2014 to 2024.

Identify the main challenges faced by the industrial and agricultural sectors worldwide due to the Russian-Ukrainian crisis.

Highlight the measures taken by Arab countries to address the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the food security of Arab nations.

Time Frame of the Research:

The research begins in 2014, the year Russia launched a military campaign against Ukraine and annexed the Crimean Peninsula to the Russian Federation, and ends in the current year, 2024.

Study Methodology:

The study employed the following methodologies:

Systems Analysis Approach: This approach in international relations aligns with the nature of international relations within the global system. It divides the world into an international system and regional or sub-regional systems (major units, minor units, and medium units). There exists a type of influence, interaction, and mutual impact between these systems, which generates patterns of behavior within the international system or sub-systems. The international system comprises a set of variables that are interlinked and intertwined, producing distinct patterns of international behavior through the interaction of these variables, whether internal or external.

Descriptive-Analytical Method: This method is suitable for analyzing the course of Russian-Ukrainian relations, clarifying the nature of their mutual relations, tracking the development of events, identifying the reasons that exacerbated the crisis between them, and understanding its implications on the food security of Arab countries.

Chapter One: Roots and Causes of the Ukrainian Crisis (December 1991 – February 2022)

Ukraine, with a population of approximately 43 million and an area of 603,550 square kilometers, is located on Russia's southwestern border. It became independent in 1991 after the

collapse of the Soviet Union, which was founded by Lenin. Ukraine was one of the most prominent republics of the Soviet Union. After gaining independence in December 1991, a division emerged regarding Ukraine's identity. In the east, Ukrainians saw themselves as closer to Russia, while in the west, they identified more with Europe. Ukraine's westward orientation raised concerns in Russia, but it did not escalate into a conflict between Russia and Ukraine because the West was not yet seeking to incorporate Ukraine, and Russia had not recovered sufficiently, in economic or military terms, to engage in risky or uncertain confrontations with the West, particularly the United States¹.

Over the next thirteen years, the Ukrainian political elite failed to resolve internal political divisions and to build a strong economy that could ensure the state's stability. This failure led to the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in November 2004, part of the so-called color revolutions in Eastern European countries. The revolution arose after accusations of election fraud against the former pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovich. The revolution forced Yanukovich to rerun the elections, which resulted in the victory of the pro-Western opposition leader, Viktor Yushchenko, angering Russia².

From this perspective, Russian leaders realized that the West's goal was to install pro-Western governments in Russia's geographic vicinity, aiming to curtail Russian influence in regions like Eurasia, the Balkans, and Eastern Europe. According to the Russian viewpoint, the West's interest in supporting democracy in Ukraine was not genuine but rather an attempt to create Western spheres of influence on Russia's borders, posing a direct threat to Russia's national security and its economic ties with Ukraine³.

At the NATO summit in April 2008, the United States called for the admission of Georgia and Ukraine into the alliance, which provoked Russia and was seen as a direct challenge from the United States, bringing NATO closer to Russia's borders. At that time, President Putin warned at the time that if Ukraine joined NATO, the very existence of the state might be in jeopardy. This issue resurfaced in 2014, with Russia taking a much firmer stance due to Ukraine's strategic importance to Russia⁴.

Ukraine holds significant geostrategic importance as the gateway to Russia from Europe. With Putin's "Russian revival" project, which he has led for two decades, and Russia's return as a major power influencing international politics, Ukraine has automatically become central to Russia's foreign policy agenda. This is not only to reintegrate Ukraine into Russia but also to ensure it does not become a vulnerable flank or a battleground exploited by the West against Russia⁵.

It is well known that the Danube River divides Ukraine into east and west before it flows into the Black Sea. The Donbas region, located in eastern Ukraine, is home to a large Russian-speaking population that advocates either for joining the Russian Federation or for secession from Ukraine. The West claims that the majority of the Ukrainian population leans towards it and supports Ukraine's accession to NATO and the European Union. In eastern Ukraine, there are also two regions seeking to secede from Ukraine: Donetsk and Luhansk. On February 22, 2022, Russia recognized both regions as independent republics. Subsequently, Russia signed treaties of cooperation and mutual defense with both republics, which were ratified by the Russian parliament.

Russia used these treaties to empower the governments of Donetsk and Luhansk to request Russian "intervention" on their behalf to prevent the Ukrainian army from attacking them. The Russian military intervention resulted in a sweeping invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Thus began the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This military sweep did not stop at defending Donetsk and Luhansk; it became clear that the operation also aimed to overthrow the pro-Western and anti-Russian Ukrainian government. As a result, the Russian army began encircling the capital, Kyiv⁶.

Causes of the 2022 Russian-Ukrainian War:

Former U.S. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski issued a strong warning in 2013 at the annual Global Security Conference organized by the GLOBSEC Forum in Bratislava, Slovakia, about Russia's ambitions. He noted that Russia's national identity and sense of uniqueness make it difficult for the country to approach European unity. Brzezinski once remarked that without Ukraine, Russia is seen as a natural nation-state in its own right, but with Ukraine, Russia becomes an empire. Despite extensive analysis, the West ignored this fundamental truth, which is evident when considering Russia's position three decades ago⁷. The war between Russia and Ukraine, which erupted on February 24, 2022, was not a surprise; its precursors began as soon as President Putin came to power in Russia, with the events intensifying from 2014 onwards⁸.

Some believe that one of the main reasons for the invasion of Ukraine is its geographic location. Russia views Ukraine's neutrality as essential, serving as a buffer zone. Consequently, Moscow opposed Kyiv's accession to NATO. President Putin has stated that Ukraine is not a distinct state from Russia due to their shared cultural, historical, and linguistic ties, asserting that Ukraine directly belongs within Russia's sphere of influence. He insists that he does not want Ukraine to become part of the Western orbit⁹.

Ten months after the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war on February 24, 2022, it became evident that the conflict is indeed a serious and genuine international struggle, despite being a regional conflict between two regional states, Russia and Ukraine. It also became clear that this conflict appears to be the most dangerous confrontation that Russia, the West, Europe, and the United States have faced since World War II, marking the most significant challenge in the seven decades since the Cold War¹⁰.

Chapter Two: The International Stance on the 2022 Russian-Ukrainian War:

The Position of the United States and NATO:

The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden established a set of guidelines to achieve strategic objectives and protect American interests from the repercussions of the crisis. These guidelines include:

1. **Avoiding Direct Military Confrontation with Russia:** In managing the Ukraine crisis, Washington set a red line, which is to avoid direct military confrontation with Russia for any

reason related to the crisis. In this context, the White House repeatedly emphasized that the United States would not send military forces to Ukraine¹¹.

2. **Attempting to Deter Russian Military Intervention in Ukraine:** This effort is driven by two primary U.S. interests. The first relates to American interests in Europe and the negative consequences that a scenario of Russian military intervention could have on these interests. The second involves the "China factor" in the crisis. There were American assessments that Russian military intervention might encourage Beijing to replicate the same scenario in Taiwan.
3. **Ensuring Global Energy Security:** Russia is one of the largest exporters of oil and gas to Europe. Therefore, any escalation or tension with Russia could impact global energy markets, leading to higher oil prices, which would directly affect American consumers and exacerbate inflation within the U.S. economy. From this perspective, one of the U.S. goals in managing the Ukraine crisis was to ensure global energy security and the steady flow of oil and gas. In this context, Washington held consultations with its allies, particularly in the Middle East, to secure alternatives to Russian oil and gas.
4. **Preventing the Collapse of the Central Government in Kyiv¹²:** The U.S. National Security Strategy, issued on October 12, 2022, emphasized that China remains the primary focus of the United States and its main source of challenge, followed by Russia. The document stated that, concerning Russia: "Contain Russian imperialism." It regarded Russia as a state that has been trying to impose its imperial influence on neighboring countries for nearly a decade in an attempt to alter the international order. The clearest example of this is Russia's war against Ukraine¹³.

The strategy outlined several mechanisms for addressing the Russian challenge, which included:

- A. **Continuous Support for Ukraine:** The strategy emphasized ongoing support for Ukraine to enable it to defend itself, by gathering aid from allies and friendly nations, with the aim of turning Russia's war against Ukraine into a strategic error or failure.
- B. **Exhausting the Russian Economy:** Through a system of sanctions designed to limit Russia's ability to enhance its military capabilities.
- C. **Preventing Russia from Using nuclear weapons:** The strategy aimed to deter Russia from resorting to nuclear weapons. However, the document did not discuss the potential response of the United States and NATO if President Putin decided to use a tactical nuclear weapon in Ukraine.

The outcomes of the war on U.S. strategies have demonstrated a strong American commitment to supporting its allies in Europe, alongside a desire to contain and restrain Russia. The war might eventually lead to a reassessment of NATO policies, making the alliance more capable of responding to challenges and threats, particularly in the event of a confrontation between one of its members and another major power¹⁴.

China's Position:

Although analysts have labeled China as the "biggest winner" from the Russian-Ukrainian war, it has not reaped the expected benefits. In fact, Beijing knew little about Moscow's intentions regarding the military operations in Ukraine and has repeatedly expressed its lack of support for the ongoing war in Eastern Europe.

China does not desire a conflict between Russia and Ukraine for several reasons. The first is to avoid the strategic dilemma it currently faces, being caught between the need to maintain a crucial strategic partnership with Russia and the desire to uphold a strong friendship with Ukraine. It is worth noting that China's first aircraft carrier, named "Liaoning," is actually the former Ukrainian ship "Varyag," which China purchased second-hand from Ukraine in 1998. Additionally, Chinese food companies have close cooperative relationships with their Ukrainian counterparts, and many Chinese citizens have chosen Ukraine as a destination for education and tourism¹⁵.

With the outbreak of war between Moscow and Kyiv and the intensification of hostilities between the two sides, it became impossible for China to maintain balanced relations with both parties to the conflict. As a result, Beijing has been careful to avoid directly criticizing Russia while simultaneously sending aid to Ukraine. However, China's strategy of balance has not succeeded in pleasing either side. Moscow has criticized Beijing for its reluctance to openly support the military operation against Ukraine, while Ukrainians view China as an ally of Russia. European and American media have even labeled China as an "instigator" of the war¹⁶.

The shared objectives of Moscow and Beijing can be summarized as follows:

- **Curbing the dominance of the U.S. dollar** and its role as a global currency in international trade.
- **Creating a balance in the global economy** that is free from the fluctuations of international stock markets and speculation on the fundamental resources of some countries, such as raw materials and various services.
- **Establishing parallel institutions** to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which are dominated by the West, focused on sustainable development in the Third World, and protecting the interests and growth of emerging countries by stabilizing exchange rates between their currencies.
- **Protecting the value of domestic assets** from external risks caused by the global financial system under U.S. dominance.
- **Countering the threats of terrorism** and religious and ethnic extremism.
- **Reforming the structure of the United Nations Security Council** to grant it exclusive authority in handling armed conflicts worldwide, and rejecting the unilateral actions of military alliances that operate outside its decisions and established mechanisms¹⁷.

In his speech at the U.S. Department of State on February 4, 2021, President Joe Biden emphasized the challenge and threat that Russia, along with China, poses to U.S. national security and American interests, stating that the U.S.-Russia confrontation would continue and intensify in the future.

Regarding Russia, NATO reaffirmed that it does not seek confrontation with Russia and poses no threat to the Russian Federation. Therefore, the Western alliance remains prepared to keep communication channels open with Moscow to manage and reduce risks, prevent escalation, and increase transparency¹⁸. NATO's new strategic roadmap claims to seek stability and anticipates the future of the Euro-Atlantic region, setting expectations for the future relationship between NATO members and Russia. Additionally, NATO expressed its intention to maintain the option of constructive engagement with China, which includes efforts to enhance transparency in order to protect the security interests of NATO countries¹⁹.

Chapter Three: The Concept of Food Security and Its Indicators:

Food security has various definitions, but they generally revolve around a society's ability to meet the needs of all its residents for adequate and healthy food at any given time. Numerous regional and international organizations adopt their own specific concepts of food security due to the importance of this issue and its implications for the overall national security of a country²⁰.

The World Bank defines food security as the ability of all people to access the necessary food for their activity and health at all times. Food security in a country is achieved when its marketing and trade organizations can supply sufficient food to all citizens at all times, even during crises, periods of reduced local production, or changes in international market conditions²¹.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines food security as being achieved when "all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." The concept of food security is closely linked to the issues of poverty, health, and energy. According to World Bank calculations, the ability of agricultural investments to reduce poverty is twice as effective as investments in any other sector, highlighting the importance of agriculture as a key driver for ensuring food security.

Moreover, those who suffer from low energy levels or poor health often struggle to be productive. As a result, individuals who are unable to find sufficient employment lose their ability to purchase food. This relationship is often referred to as the connection between food, nutrition, and livelihoods²².

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as being achieved when all people, at all times, have the physical, economic, and social ability to obtain sufficient, safe food that meets their dietary needs and preferences for a healthy and active life²³.

This definition emphasizes that food is a fundamental factor for a healthy and active life while considering consumer preferences and economic and social aspects. Therefore, food insecurity is defined as existing when people lack safe access to or the ability to obtain adequate quantities of nutritious food necessary for normal growth and an active, healthy life. The causes of food insecurity may include the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, improper income distribution, or inadequate food utilization at the household level.

As a result, achieving national food security does not necessarily guarantee individual food security. It requires the adoption of broader measures to ensure that all individuals have secure access to the food they need complementary policies such as equitable income distribution to enhance consumers' purchasing power²⁴.

In January 1996, during the Tunis Declaration on Arab Food Security, Arab agriculture ministers who were members of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development approved the Arab concept of food security. This concept emphasizes the provision of food in sufficient quantity and quality to ensure the health and activity of all individuals in the Arab world, relying primarily on local production and based on the comparative advantage of each Arab country in producing certain food commodities. The aim is to make food available to Arab citizens at prices that are affordable relative to their incomes and financial capabilities. This definition underscores the importance of achieving food security through local production first (self-sufficiency) and is founded on the principle of exchange and integration in food production among Arab countries²⁵, based on the comparative advantage in producing food commodities and exchanging them within the Arab region.

The researcher believes that achieving food security is a commitment that governments owe to their citizens, deriving from a broader obligation to provide and protect human rights, as outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations in 1948. Therefore, governments are responsible for ensuring that every citizen has sufficient access to food, is protected from hunger, and is relieved from hunger if it occurs. Consequently, they are obligated to take the necessary measures to ensure that policies regarding food production, preservation, and distribution align with the goals of securing and protecting the right to food and ensuring food security.

The 1996 World Food Summit defined food security as a situation where all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life. This definition, which has become the globally accepted concept, is adopted by both the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) with slight variations in wording. The concept focuses on four key pillars: food availability, access to food, food safety, and continuous stability²⁶.

Food security is divided into two types:

1. **Absolute Food Security:** This can be defined as a country's ability to produce enough food domestically to meet or exceed local demand. This level of food security is synonymous with full self-sufficiency and is also known as self-reliant food security. However, the broad and absolute definition of food security is unrealistic, as it overlooks the opportunity for the concerned country to benefit from the comparative advantages of international trade based on specialization²⁷.
2. **Relative Food Security:** This refers to the ability of a country or a group of countries to provide for the basic food needs of their society or societies, either wholly or partially, and to ensure a minimum level of those needs regularly. According to this definition, relative food security does not necessarily mean producing all basic food requirements domestically. Instead, it primarily

involves securing the necessary materials to meet food needs through other products in which the country or countries have a comparative advantage over others. Thus, the relative concept of food security should be based on three main pillars: the availability of food commodities, their consistent presence, and prices that are affordable for citizens²⁸.

Conditions for Food Security:

For any country to achieve food security, it must meet a set of conditions, the most important of which include:

- Producing the maximum amount of essential foodstuffs required by the population, both in quantity and quality, from its own resources or those of allied countries.
- Producing the largest possible variety of food resources based on the principles of comparative advantage and economic feasibility to meet the demand for food within the country and potentially abroad.
- Enabling the population to access food in adequate quantity and quality, ensuring that it meets the needs of children, men, women, and all social classes.
- **Achieving the highest possible percentage in the national food trade balance** based on stable and fair trade principles that ensure the interests of all involved parties.
- **Focusing on preventive food security**, which involves maintaining a strategic reserve of essential foodstuffs²⁹.

The more a country achieves food security, the stronger it becomes in maintaining its sovereignty and national security against external threats and pressures aimed at undermining it and controlling its resources and independent international decisions. Additionally, achieving food security has a significant impact on internal stability and security within individual countries, as well as on international relations and global peace³⁰.

Global Food Security:

Although achieving global food security has been included as a primary goal within the Millennium Development Goals, particularly under the aim of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, this objective, like others, remains elusive. Despite a reduction in the number of hungry people worldwide, there was a significant increase, reaching its highest level in 2009, when the number exceeded one billion people. This marked an increase of approximately 150 million hungry individuals compared to the 850 million recorded in 1990, even though world leaders had pledged at the start of the third millennium to reduce the number of hungry people by 50% by 2015, compared to 1990 levels.

Global Food Security:

Food security remains a major concern for nations and governments worldwide. The issue of food security is at the top of the agenda in international and regional summits and conferences.

Research centers and think tanks in countries around the world are actively conducting studies and providing recommendations aimed at mitigating the impact of price fluctuations in food commodities, whether they rise or fall³¹.

Global food security holds immense importance for humanity and societies worldwide, as its significance is reflected in its ability to achieve the following:

1. **Eradication of Hunger and Poverty:** Global food security contributes to providing sufficient and nutritious food for all individuals, helping to reduce hunger and extreme poverty globally.
2. **Enhancement of Population Health:** Access to safe and balanced food significantly impacts the health of the population, promoting overall well-being³².
3. **Environmental Sustainability:** Global food security is also a key component of environmental sustainability. It encourages sustainable agricultural practices and the effective management of natural resources, which helps preserve biodiversity and protect the environment³³.
4. **Promotion of Social and Political Stability:** Global food security contributes to enhancing social and political stability within nations. When food is sufficiently available, it reduces the likelihood of social, economic, and political unrest associated with food shortages.
5. **Economic Development:** Global food security fosters economic development by encouraging agricultural production and international trade in agricultural products, thereby boosting local economies and creating new job opportunities.
6. **Preservation of Food Sovereignty:** Global food security is a fundamental pillar for achieving food sovereignty. It enables countries to rely on local food supplies and reduce dependence on food imports, thereby enhancing their ability to meet the needs of their populations and ensure food security³⁴.
7. **Reduction of Social Unrest and Migration:** When food is not sufficiently available, it can lead to social and economic unrest, increased migration, and conflicts.
8. **Adaptation to Climate Change:** Global food security is crucial for climate change adaptation, as it helps develop sustainable agricultural practices that are resilient to climatic changes and promote biodiversity.
9. **Maintenance of International Peace and Security:** Global food security contributes to maintaining international peace and security. When food is sufficiently and sustainably available, it reduces the likelihood of conflicts related to competition over food resources and fosters international cooperation in the field of food security³⁵.

Dimensions of Food Security:

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food security is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. This comprehensive definition encompasses several key dimensions of food security. Based on this definition, the FAO has established indicators to measure the state of food security, the most important of which include:

- **Food Availability:** This dimension represents the supply side of food and is measured by a country's ability to provide sufficient food supplies to its population, either through local production or external markets.
- **Food Access:** This dimension is measured by the ability of all individuals in society to procure the food they need, based on their financial resources and the economic and social policies in place.
- **Food Utilization:** This dimension involves the awareness of citizens on how to optimally use food to achieve proper, healthy, and beneficial nutrition, providing the necessary energy and calories for their activities³⁶.

Based on the aforementioned points, food security is achieved on two levels: the national level and the individual level. National food security is realized when a country has sufficient quantities of food to feed its population, either through local production or food imports. Individual food security is achieved when all individuals in the country have access to adequate food. Therefore, both the state and its people are food secure when there is enough food available and when people can access it.

Food security encompasses several key dimensions, including:

1. **Moral Dimension:** This dimension relates to the current and future state of human beings, as food is a fundamental necessity for life. Therefore, food security and food supply should not be compromised.
2. **Social Dimension:** This dimension is influenced by various social factors, including population control, fertility management, and population planning, as well as social mobility within the community.
3. **Economic Dimension:** The economic dimension plays a crucial role in securing food security, which involves several elements such as natural resources, services, industrial development, and the availability of communication and transportation networks (supply chains).
4. **Political Dimension:** This dimension involves the role of the state in overseeing food security policies and programs, as well as development in all sectors, including agricultural development, to maintain national security strategies³⁷.

Chapter Four: Arab Food Security Before the Russian-Ukrainian War:

Food security is one of the greatest challenges facing the Arab world. Despite the availability of all the necessary factors that should enable Arab countries to achieve self-sufficiency and food security—such as natural factors (arable land, water availability, and climate diversity) and human factors (affordable labor)—Arab countries still suffer from a shortfall in food production when comparing food demand with supply³⁸.

It is natural for every country to strive to meet the food needs of its citizens and to recognize the importance of ensuring food security for all members of the population. This is a fundamental

responsibility of the state. Arab countries are part of this equation, with most of them heavily relying on the importation of foodstuffs, particularly wheat, to meet their needs³⁹.

In 2022, many developing countries, particularly those in Africa and the Middle East, were shaken by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the war in Ukraine, it was estimated that around 44 million people in 38 countries were at risk of hunger. In the Middle East and North Africa, the number of people experiencing food insecurity increased significantly, with one in three people in 2020 unable to access sufficient food—an increase of 10 million people from 2019⁴⁰.

In addition to COVID-19, many Arab countries have been suffering from prolonged conflicts (such as in Yemen, Syria, and Libya) and increasing political instability (for example, in Lebanon, Sudan, and Tunisia), or are dealing with the aftermath of difficult economic reforms (such as the effects of structural reforms in Egypt). The Middle East has historically been one of the major grain-importing regions of the world, particularly for wheat. Problems with food supplies—whether due to limited yields or rising prices—of grains like wheat from Ukraine and Russia have historically impacted food security in this region⁴¹. For example, disruptions in grain exports from Russia, Ukraine, or Kazakhstan due to harvest failures or export restrictions have immediately led to increased costs for food support systems in major dependent countries⁴².

The COVID-19 pandemic caused severe disruptions in the food value chain, with restrictions on grain exports during the pandemic, alongside locust infestations that destroyed crops and led to rising prices and food insecurity in many regions, including parts of the Middle East. Countries in the Sahel region were particularly vulnerable during the pandemic, as COVID-19 weakened food sectors, exacerbating existing challenges⁴³. COVID-19 likely amplified isolationist sentiments in many parts of the world, in contrast to voices advocating for greater resilience in international trade. However, the pursuit of self-sufficiency in food products is a misguided strategy, particularly in the arid Middle East region. Previous strategies aimed at achieving this, such as those attempted by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, have largely failed⁴⁴.

Before the outbreak of COVID-19 and the current crisis related to Ukraine, the Middle East had only recently emerged from years of repeated food shocks. In the early 21st century, Middle Eastern countries faced unreliable imports and began investing in reserves and acquiring foreign agricultural land. Additionally, many countries in the region, such as Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, and Somalia, experienced severe economic shocks linked to conflict, further jeopardizing food security⁴⁵.

As an additional factor exacerbating the vulnerability of essential food supplies, climate-related shocks have also contributed to food insecurity. In particular, various types of droughts—hydrological, meteorological, and agricultural—have adversely affected the performance of food sectors in the Middle East in recent decades. Combined with the previously mentioned impacts of COVID-19, 2021 saw significant supply chain bottlenecks, with wheat and barley prices increasing by 31% and rapeseed and sunflower oil prices rising by more than 60%⁴⁶.

The researcher believes that enhancing food security can be effectively achieved by increasing both national and foreign investments in the agricultural sector. This approach requires adopting a comprehensive set of future policies to achieve food security, particularly given the limitations and scarcity of water resources in Egypt. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security was also devastating, with estimates indicating that the increase in the number of people suffering from hunger in 2020 was equivalent to the total increase over the previous five years combined. This means that nearly one in three people globally (2.37 billion individuals) did not have sufficient access to food in 2020.

The FAO's 2023 report highlights that the international community had not yet recovered from the global pandemic and is now struggling with the consequences of the war in Ukraine, which has further destabilized food and energy markets. The challenges to global food security and their drivers include conflicts and wars, such as those in Ukraine and other countries, economic slowdowns and recessions, and climate change⁴⁷.

The Russian-Ukrainian crisis erupted at a critical moment for the global economy, which had just begun to recover from the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. This exacerbated the crisis, impacting countries worldwide. Among the repercussions of the Russian war on Ukraine for the global economy were a slowdown in global economic growth and escalating inflationary pressures. The conflict caused an unprecedented shock to commodity markets, leading to a shift from global supply chains to reshoring and technological nationalism⁴⁸.

Chapter Five: The Impact of the Russian-Ukrainian War on Arab Food Security:

The beginning of 2022 witnessed rapid international developments, with the Ukrainian crisis, which escalated with the start of the Russian military operation on the morning of February 24, being among the most prominent. For nearly two decades, since the Orange Revolution in 2004, Ukraine has been at the center of the geopolitical struggle between Washington and Moscow⁴⁹.

The Ukrainian crisis is currently the most dangerous in international relations, and the conflict has three interconnected dimensions-global, regional, and local-that have profoundly negative effects on international security, including the Black Sea and the Mediterranean regions. The impact of the crisis and its repercussions on the Middle East could be far greater than expected, due to the strategic importance of these areas and their critical role in the lives of people and the relationships between countries in the region⁵⁰.

Ukraine is considered one of the world's grain storage centers, accounting for 34% of wheat, 27% of barley, 18% of corn, and 73% of sunflower oil products, which are exported through Black Sea ports to various countries in the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa. Ukraine exports more than 25% of the world's wheat. Since many Arab countries have been major importers of Russian and Ukrainian wheat for years, there are now serious risks of food insecurity in these countries⁵¹.

Between 2016 and 2021, Ukraine and Russia produced more than 50% of the world's sunflower seed supply, 19% of the world's barley, and 14% of the world's wheat, while accounting for about 30% of global wheat exports. With at least 50 countries relying on Russia and Ukraine for 30% or more of their wheat supplies, a global food crisis has erupted, exacerbated by rising energy prices, similar to the crises in 2007-2008 and 2010-2012. The increase in energy prices has also impacted fertilizer costs (natural gas is used in fertilizer production), thus limiting local production worldwide, including in Europe⁵².

The Russian Federation and Ukraine play a crucial role in the global economy as they are major exporters of crude oil, natural gas, and various metal ores, among other resources. Additionally, both countries are key players in the global agricultural sector, being major producers of wheat, fertilizers, and edible oils. Any reduction in the quantities of these commodities exported will lead to a global supply crisis, resulting in inflation and amplifying its impact on individuals. This has become evident in the current situation due to the Russian-Ukrainian war, which has triggered inflation across the entire world, particularly in the Arab world, which relies heavily on external sources, especially Russia and Ukraine, to meet its food needs⁵³. The Middle East is one of the most affected regions, with many countries in the area being listed among those most dependent on agricultural food commodities from Ukraine and Russia⁵⁴.

There is no doubt that the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is impacting energy supply chains, both directly and indirectly. This situation has far-reaching effects on the global economy, and the agricultural sector is particularly sensitive to it. Agriculture is a sector that heavily depends on energy, especially in developed regions, where machinery and modern technology have allowed for significant increases in efficiency and productivity. The rise in oil prices, one of the direct consequences of the conflict, not only affects the operational costs of agriculture but also the costs of production inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides, which are heavily reliant on oil prices. On the other hand, higher oil prices may encourage farmers to seek alternative and more sustainable energy sources, which could bring long-term benefits to the agricultural sector, though such a shift would also require substantial initial investments⁵⁵.

The Russian-Ukrainian war has had significant effects on the agricultural sector in Ukraine. Agriculture is an important part of the Ukrainian economy, and the conflict has disrupted agricultural activities, leading to both short- and long-term consequences. The war has caused major disruptions in agricultural production due to its direct impact on farming activities. Many farmers have been forced to abandon their fields, resulting in a decrease in cultivated land. Additionally, the conflict has damaged infrastructure, such as irrigation systems, storage facilities, and transportation networks, further hindering agricultural operations. The war has also led to the loss of agricultural land due to military activities, especially in areas affected by the conflict. The loss of productive land has had a direct negative impact on agricultural output and has long-term implications for the recovery of the sector. While the Russian-Ukrainian war has not had a direct impact on the Arab and global agricultural sectors, its effects are felt indirectly through disruptions in supply chains and market stability⁵⁶.

The Ukraine war represents a new era in international diplomatic and economic relations, with major reshaping of trade flows expected. The impact is not limited to the direct disruption of production in areas affected by violence; the war has also been accompanied by sanctions and boycotts that have caused significant disruptions in the value chain⁵⁷. In fact, while the effects take time to fully materialize, trade has always been a collateral damage of wars, carrying substantial costs. Moreover, war-related effects, such as disengagement from the global economy, imposed sanctions, and consumer-led boycotts to some extent, can cause further trade damage. In the case of the Ukraine war, the impacts on global trade and economic relations were immediate, with global growth declining (estimated at 3.5% instead of the usual level of over 4% for 2022)⁵⁸. The consequences extend far beyond the European continent, with regions like Latin America and Africa feeling the economic impact through rising commodity prices and financial volatility⁵⁹.

When analyzing the geopolitical impacts of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in 2022, it is important to consider not only the immediate wartime consequences but also the long-term effects on global commodity markets, particularly food and energy markets. Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022, resulted in numerous civilian casualties, the destruction of critical infrastructure, and widespread displacement. In response, many Western countries, including the United States, Europe, Canada, and Australia, gradually expanded sanctions, targeting individuals, financial institutions, large companies, and government entities, as well as exports. While the humanitarian impacts of this conflict are undoubtedly catastrophic, understanding the effect of this war on global trade, production, and consumption dynamics, especially in commodity markets, is crucial. The military aggression has dealt a severe blow to global commodity markets, particularly in the food and energy sectors, contributing to significant disruptions that appear to be keeping prices at historically high levels⁶⁰.

Among the areas particularly affected by the conflict is food production. Farmers in conflict-affected regions of Ukraine have lost their livestock, food supplies, and other assets, disrupting food supplies to markets in these regions and surrounding areas, as well as neighboring countries. The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) estimates for the 2022/2023 season indicate significant disruptions in winter grain production due to a lack of production inputs, affecting agricultural activities in both Ukraine and Russia. In Ukraine, the area planted with winter crops has decreased by about 20%. The winter wheat harvest is expected to begin in early July 2024, but fuel availability and wartime conditions may limit harvesting and storage capacities⁶².

The potential disruption of agricultural activities in Russia and Ukraine-both major exporters of essential commodities-could significantly exacerbate global food insecurity. This presents a major challenge to global food security and poses difficult and complex obstacles that could lead to one of the worst global food crises⁶³.

The significant impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on global food security is due to the crucial role both countries play in supplying global markets with food products. As a result, the war has thrown global food markets into further disarray. It is important to understand the state of global food security before the Russian-Ukrainian war, including trends in global prices of key agricultural food

commodities, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security, and other factors that were at play before the conflict. There are several aspects to the implications of this crisis: first, the weight of Russia and Ukraine in the global food commodity market; second, the channels through which the war has affected global food security; and third, the differences between the current food crisis and previous ones⁶⁴.

The Ukraine war has unleashed a complex global food crisis, characterized by supply disruptions and rising costs of key agricultural inputs such as fuel, transportation, and fertilizers. Combined with climate-related effects, the underlying vulnerabilities from the COVID-19 pandemic, and various conflicts, many countries in the Global South are paying a high price for essential food commodities like grains and cooking oil⁶⁵.

The war in Ukraine, coupled with rising prices in late 2021, has significantly impacted import-dependent countries in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as sub-Saharan Africa, which heavily rely on Russian and Ukrainian wheat. The conflict in Ukraine can affect food security for several reasons. These include reduced production due to producers being engaged in the war, their inability to produce, or fleeing the country, as well as the destruction of crops and water infrastructure. Additionally, the disruption of agricultural inputs in external markets further exacerbates the situation. The conflict also hampers the ability of international agencies to provide food aid to countries suffering from famine or other armed conflicts. The rise in energy prices will also affect energy-related inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides, which is likely to have global impacts on agricultural production. As a result, this will influence the prices of agricultural products, which are already affected by pre-war factors such as COVID-19⁶⁶.

The problem of food insecurity has worsened as imports and food supplies, especially of strategic commodities, decreased in 2022 due to the fact that the warring countries account for the largest share of these grains⁶⁷.

When discussing the economic repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the Arab region, it is important to consider its negative impact on Arab economies, which has resulted in unprecedented increases in the prices of goods, foodstuffs, gas, and iron in a short period of time due to the rise in imports of wheat and other foods. Most Arab countries have opted to remain neutral, fearing for their shared interests with both sides of the conflict, including food supply chains and energy partnerships. This crisis has highlighted the urgent need to achieve Arab food security, which has become a major priority for Arab states. The ultimate outcome of the Russian-Ukrainian war has been the soaring of food prices to unprecedented levels and the necessity to develop integrated economic policies in agriculture to achieve self-sufficiency in food, while simultaneously balancing relations with Russia and the U.S. and maintaining a neutral stance⁶⁸.

The researcher believes that self-sufficiency is a primary goal for any country seeking to achieve stability and move towards sustainable development. This concept requires political, economic, and social stability, which makes it challenging to discuss self-sufficiency in developing countries. Achieving self-sufficiency requires increasing food production to cover consumption, which in turn

demands the use of modern agriculture, expanding the percentage of cultivated land, and the ability to cope with unstable environmental conditions.

The war has already led to serious concerns regarding food security in highly vulnerable areas. It has immediately caused significant risks and shortages, particularly concerning production, trade flows, and food commodity prices. Ukraine and/or Russia were among the top three global producers of wheat, corn, rapeseed, sunflower seeds, and sunflower oil. Additionally, Russia ranks very highly globally in the production of key fertilizers. As a result, there have been severe warnings about food insecurity due to the war in Ukraine. With the availability of grains and fertilizers reduced by the conflict, global food supplies are now under threat⁶⁹.

When examining the implications of the Russian-Ukrainian war on Arab food security, it becomes evident that Russia is the world's largest wheat exporter, with 37.3 million tons annually, while Ukraine ranks fourth with 18.1 million tons annually. The danger lies in the fact that most Arab countries, where bread is a staple food, primarily rely on wheat imports from Russia and Ukraine. Research results show that, for instance, in 2020, Arab countries alone accounted for 11% of global wheat exports, importing approximately 13.165 thousand tons of wheat from Russia and about 7.598 thousand tons from Ukraine. This represents 42.1% of the total exports of the two crisis-affected countries, according to data from an Arab bank⁷⁰.

The consequences of the war initiated by Russia against Ukraine have affected not only the stability of both countries but also the entire region and the world⁷¹. The Russian-Ukrainian war has had significant repercussions on global food security, particularly by reducing Ukraine's agricultural production capacity and leading to a global food supply shortage⁷².

Since February 2022, the war in Ukraine has caused numerous consequences, including severe pressure on food security at both national and global levels. The reasons for this intense pressure include rising prices, supply chain disruptions, and most importantly, the fact that Ukraine is one of the world's primary breadbaskets. Ukraine exports about 20% of the world's total wheat production. Regarding corn and sunflower, Ukraine accounts for 10% and 45% of global production, respectively.

Ukraine is also among the top exporters of sunflower seeds, oilseeds, rapeseed, corn, and wheat. For example, Ukraine supplies about one-third of the grains in the Middle East and North Africa region. East Africa also heavily relies on grain imports, with 45% of its grain imports coming from Ukraine⁷³.

Fragile countries such as Libya, Pakistan, Yemen, and Lebanon receive 30% of their wheat imports from Ukraine, indicating that a significant portion of their populations are living in a state of food insecurity. The Russian war on Ukraine has cast a negative shadow on global food security, particularly affecting developing countries, including Arab nations that heavily rely on Ukrainian and Russian wheat supplies. These two countries together accounted for nearly 30% of the world's wheat exports in 2020, reflecting the extent of Arab dependency on these sources⁷⁴. Especially Russia,

which imposed a ban on grain exports until at least the end of August 2022 to secure its domestic needs following the severe sanctions imposed on it⁷⁵.

This region has long relied on food imports, particularly grains, to meet the growing needs of its population. Due to limited agricultural production capacities resulting from harsh climatic conditions, these countries must depend on external sources to ensure food security for their citizens. In this context, Ukraine, as one of the largest grain exporters in the world, plays a crucial role in securing food supplies for the Middle East and North Africa⁷⁶.

However, there are significant challenges facing Arab countries in securing their grain needs. With the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the imposition of increasing and severe sanctions by Western countries on Russia, coupled with the potential suspension of exports from both countries, including grain exports, concerns about the impact of this crisis on food security in Arab countries have escalated. This is particularly troubling because many of these nations heavily rely on grain imports from both Ukraine and Russia⁷⁷.

With the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the imposition of increasing and severe sanctions by Western countries on Russia, along with the potential suspension of exports from both countries, including grain exports, concerns about the impact of this crisis on food security in Arab countries are growing. This is particularly alarming because many Arab nations heavily depend on grain imports from both Ukraine and Russia. According to a study conducted by the Union of Arab Banks, Arab countries significantly rely on imports of wheat and corn from Russia and Ukraine⁷⁸.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has led to a global food crisis, as 36 out of 55 countries already experiencing food crises rely on exports from Ukraine and Russia. Before 2022, these two countries produced around 30% of the world's supply of wheat, barley, and corn, and over half of its sunflower oil. Approximately 22% of Ukraine's agricultural land, including 28% of winter crops and 18% of summer crops, is not under official Ukrainian control, according to an analysis by NASA Harvest. The "Black Sea Grain Initiative" (BSGI), aimed at ensuring the safe transportation of grain and foodstuffs from Ukrainian ports, helped stabilize rising global food prices and prevented hunger from affecting millions of people⁷⁹.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative, signed in July 2022 to allow some grain exports from Ukraine, mitigated some of the impacts of the Ukraine war on food security, particularly by easing pressures on grain markets. However, as of January 2023, the BSGI remains fragile due to shipping restrictions, and the ongoing global food crisis continues to persist⁸⁰.

The rise in food prices can exacerbate the issue of food availability, placing additional pressure on access to food for low-income populations who spend a significant portion of their income on grains. Countries heavily reliant on Ukrainian and Russian grain imports—such as Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Tunisia, Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, and Nigeria—are particularly vulnerable. This war also impacts the ability of international agencies to provide food aid to countries suffering from famine or other armed conflicts⁸¹.

A study on food insecurity in the Middle East following the Ukraine war highlights the complexity of the crisis, which is compounded by a mix of internal and external factors. Unlike previous food crises, such as those before the Arab Spring in 2011, which were linked to poor harvests and subsequent food price hikes, the current crisis is marked by the disruption of food supplies and the more significant impact of rising food prices⁸². This is further exacerbated by increases in the costs of other essential commodities, such as fertilizers, fuel, and transportation⁸³.

Countries that are somewhat vulnerable, such as Algeria, Jordan, and Egypt, are facing "manageable" pressures due to lower levels of dependency, the availability of alternative domestic production, or well-performing food sectors. This situation also underscores the importance of food diplomacy in these countries to maintain the flow of vital grains. For instance, Algeria relies on its relationship with France, Turkey with Russia, and Jordan with Romania. Within this group of moderately vulnerable countries, Egypt and Tunisia stand out as facing greater exposure due to high dependency ratios. However, both Egypt and Tunisia have strengthened their food storage capacities in recent years and invested in expanding wheat infrastructure. Tunisia's imports from Ukraine are relatively stable but can be volatile.

In both cases, the exposure to the food crisis linked to Ukraine is complicated by factors such as population growth (in Egypt), COVID-19 disruptions, and increasing internal political conflicts (in Tunisia). Some immediate strategies included securing additional funds, for example, from Gulf states, to cover the rising costs of food subsidies, while redirecting food import strategies towards new sources in Asia. Later, the release of some shipments from Ukraine helped reduce supply pressures, although economic difficulties and high food prices continue to persist⁸⁴.

The attack on Ukraine has exacerbated global food security issues, particularly for Arab countries. The war has significantly disrupted the transportation of goods⁸⁵. Nearly all of Ukraine's grain exports passed through Black Sea ports, which were non-operational before the signing of the "Black Sea Grain Initiative" in Istanbul, Turkey, on July 22, 2022. Ukraine was expected to export up to 20 million tons of wheat during the season (summer 2022), which accounts for approximately 10% of global wheat exports⁸⁶.

The Russian-Ukrainian war has led to disruptions and restrictions in trade, which can have significant impacts on global agricultural trade flows. During times of conflict, countries often impose export bans or restrictions on agricultural goods, implementing these measures to ensure local food security by prioritizing domestic consumption. Export bans reduce the availability of goods in the global market, leading to decreased supplies. The conflict has also created logistical challenges that hinder the smooth movement of agricultural goods across borders. Damage to transportation infrastructure, such as roads, railways, and ports, disrupts the flow of goods, while increased border controls and security measures add further delays and complicate trade operations⁸⁷.

These challenges can lead to higher costs, longer delivery times, and a heightened sense of uncertainty for both importers and exporters. As a result, the war in 2022 has significantly impacted global trade, particularly in the agricultural sector⁸⁸.

Conclusion:

The Russian-Ukrainian crisis has marked a pivotal moment in the world, with the future outcomes of these events difficult to predict due to the complexity of the crisis and its involvement in global political dynamics and the tensions between the Eastern and Western blocs. The crisis has also deeply affected the global economy, particularly in the energy and food sectors, which are the backbone of both agriculture and industry. As we have observed, these sectors have been significantly harmed by the crisis, with negative repercussions for Arab countries.

The Russian-Ukrainian crisis poses a serious and direct existential threat to Arab food security, necessitating urgent solutions to mitigate the immediate consequences of the crisis, along with long-term strategies to prevent its recurrence. Arab countries must therefore reconsider their definition of Arab national security, incorporating food security as one of its key components. The concept of Arab food security, once considered a luxury topic, must be reemphasized until self-sufficiency in food is achieved across all Arab countries by increasing local production rates and expanding the cultivation of essential crops.

There is no alternative but to return to this goal with genuine determination and a forward-looking approach to exploring the possibilities and opportunities for Arab food integration. This will strengthen food security for all countries in the region through investments in joint Arab agricultural projects. With the presence of substantial Arab financial surpluses, vast arable land, and exceptional Arab expertise in various fields related to food production, the only missing element is true integration.

Results:

- Countries aim to achieve food security as it frees them from the constraints of dependency on others.
- The strategic interests conflict between Russia and Ukraine has historically made their relationship tense. The Russian-Ukrainian war has led to inflation and a decline in global economic growth.
- The Russian-Ukrainian war has exerted significant pressure on global prices, causing them to rise substantially.
- The Russian-Ukrainian war threatens both global and Arab food security.
- The Russian-Ukrainian war threatens global peace.
- The level of Arab food security achievement remains modest, and the food gap continues to widen.
- Some Arab countries suffer from food insecurity due to external developments, including the pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war, especially as they experience internal conflicts such as those in Sudan, Yemen, and Syria.
- The Russian-Ukrainian war has caused severe damage to Arab food security.
- The lack of diversity in food suppliers makes countries vulnerable to food dependency, as is the case in Egypt, Yemen, and Syria, which rely heavily on strategic grain imports from Ukraine. This has negatively affected both the type of food available and the size of strategic reserves in these countries.

- The fragility and ineffectiveness of global systems in resolving conflicts.
- The potential for the effects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine to persist for several years.

Recommendations:

1. The issue of food security is a significant concern for decision-making circles in the Arab world, given the current situation and the global changes that require Arab leaders to reconsider and restructure current and future policies to integrate the concept of food security into security strategies as a key component of national security, on par with other aspects such as security, military, and economic security.
2. The crisis highlights the need for Arab countries to pursue self-sufficiency in food security through investment in joint Arab agricultural projects, given the large financial surpluses and vast arable land across the Arab world.
3. It is essential to intensify efforts to develop plans to address the global food crisis and to double global efforts to combat poverty and assist developing and poor countries in coping with the heavy burdens they now bear due to rising energy and food prices.
4. Every effort must be made to avoid and reduce human suffering caused by shortages of agricultural goods, such as wheat and grains. Hunger, poverty, and political instability are the most pressing short-term concerns that significantly impact the economic stability of nations. However, the broader and clearer message is to protect global food security from future crises; therefore, the world must undertake long-term investments to fill the gaps in agricultural activities and food systems to ensure their capacity to sustainably provide global food supplies for all countries.

Footnotes

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